

Hague, George

Union
Jack

of Canada

England

Scotland

Newfoundland

Victoria

New South Wales

New Zealand

South Australia

Tasmania

Cape of Good Hope

Honduras

Leeward Islds.

Labuan

Heligoland

Jamaica

W. Af. Settlements

Hong Kong

Fiji Islands

Mauritius

Malta

Queensland

W. Australia

Ceylon

Natal

Guiana

Windward Islds.

Trinidad

Bahamas

New Guinea

Straits Settlements

St. Helena

Cyprus

Bermuda

Gibraltar

Perth

Aden

Imperial Federation.

THE POSITION OF CANADA.

An Address (Revised)

BY

MR. GEORGE HAGUE,

General Manager Merchants Bank of Canada,

BEFORE THE

MONTREAL BRANCH

OF THE

IMPERIAL FEDERATION LEAGUE
IN CANADA,

Tuesday Evening, February 16th,

1886.

Malta



Perth

Aden



THE POSITION OF CANADA

IN RELATION TO

ANNEXATION, SECESSION OR INDEPENDENCE,

AND

IMPERIAL FEDERATION.



MONTREAL
WILLIAM DRYSDALE & CO., PUBLISHERS.
1886.

In discussing so complicated a matter as Imperial Federation, it is evident that no practical conclusion can be arrived at without a knowledge of the position of all the parties concerned. This paper is an attempt to present to our friends in England a statement of the position of the people of Canada in relation to various questions connected with the main issue.

The views of the writer are his own. The League in Canada is not responsible for them. Opinions differ as to details, while, with regard to the great matter of preserving the unity of the Empire, we are one.

IMPERIAL FEDERATION.

THE POSITION OF CANADA.

AN ADDRESS (REVISED) BY MR. GEORGE HAGUE, BEFORE THE MONTREAL
BRANCH OF THE IMPERIAL FEDERATION LEAGUE IN CANADA, TUESDAY
EVENING, FEBRUARY 16, 1886.

When English gentlemen of position address the people of Canada, stating that unity between Great Britain and her colonies is desirable in itself, and should be perpetuated, they strike a chord to which an all but unanimous response will be made, wherever the name and power of Britain are found. When they further state that in their judgment some closer tie than the one now existing is desirable in order to the continuance of that union, such an opinion is entitled to respect and consideration. When they suggest that such closer tie should take the form of a Federal union, with special arrangements for mutual defence, the people of the colonies cannot but be gratified at the evidence which such a proposition gives of a better appreciation of the sentiments that animate them. For the very invitation implies a certain recognition of equality. It indicates an entire change of base from that spirit of contemptuous depreciation which has provoked the just resentment of millions of people.

The proposal, however, involves some of the highest problems of statemanship. It has already been the subject of discussion in Great Britain, Australia and Canada. While there is an almost entire unanimity in the fundamental idea of preserving a United Empire, there is a diversity of opinion as to whether any special measures need to be taken to accomplish it; and, if so, what those measures should be. Even at this early stage of the discussion it is evident that much misunderstanding exists in regard to our mutual position and relations. It is well that this has been brought out.

The position of Canada is indeed constantly misunderstood even by our nearest neighbours. They cannot comprehend why we deliberately prefer to maintain a political entity of our own, rather than to cast in

our lot with them. It is equally evident that our friends in the Mother Country do not understand us. Every pamphlet and document hitherto published in connection with Federation has given evidence of this. Whatever appreciation the people of the Mother Country may have of Australia or other colonies, it is evident that they do not understand Canada. A striking illustration of this has recently been afforded in the charming book of Mr. Froude, who, after travelling round the world to see British colonies, actually stopped at our very border, because, as he thought, it would be too cold to visit Canada in May! As Canada is the most important, and, in many respects, the best worth-studying of the Colonies, Oceana may be looked on as Hamlet with the part of Hamlet omitted.*

A mutual understanding of each other's position is necessary to any discussion of a closer union. It is with a view of putting the position of Canada clearly before our friends who have approached us, that this paper has been written.

I do not presume to be a perfect exponent of Canadian opinion, or of the history or possibilities of the country. Every man can speak only from his own point of view, and relate things as they appear to himself. I have, however, had fair opportunities of forming a judgment. Thirty years of my life were spent in England; thirty more have been spent in Canada. I have lived for many years in both of Canada's chief centres—Montreal and Toronto—and, from the nature of my occupation, can scarcely fail to have an intimate acquaintance with every Province of the Dominion. For the same reason it has fallen to my lot to have a practical acquaintance with many important interests of the adjoining States.

* Had Mr. Froude taken the next Pullman car to Toronto he would soon have found himself in a genial spring climate, for Canada *has* a Spring, and a lovely season it is. He would have passed, in an hour or two, through Canadian peach orchards about to bloom, to the lawns and parks of one of the most beautiful cities on this continent, a city in which a literary man would find himself more at home than in any other in America, except Boston. And travelling further, he would have arrived at cities like Montreal and Quebec, whose historical associations should surely have a charm for a historian equal to the material charms of Melbourne or Sydney. Montreal and Quebec too, have high material charms of their own. Mr. Froude should come to Canada and see for himself. Meantime, he might look into *Picturesque Canada*, first published in Toronto, and now being republished by Cassels.

The position of Canada as a Colony is unique. It is entirely different from that of Australia, New Zealand, the Cape, or any other British dependency.

Our country is a part of the Continent of North America, immediately contiguous to the Northern States of the American Republic. It is separated from them for the whole distance across the continent, for the most part by an invisible line. Broadly speaking, we occupy the whole of the northern portion of the continent; but, as the boundary line trends considerably to the south our southern tiers of counties are more than 400 miles further south than the northern tiers of counties in the States. This fact should be noted.

When we leave those great Maritime Provinces of the Dominion that have a coast line of some 1,500 miles on the Atlantic, travelling inland we own at first large tracts of territory on both shores of the St. Lawrence. As we proceed to the South-west we reap the fruit of the blundering diplomacy which adjusted the boundaries of Canada, without asking the opinion of Canadians.* Our thickly settled territory from about the mouth of the Ottawa is wholly on the northern side of the river, and of the chain of inland seas that occupy the centre of the continent. Beyond them come the vast stretches of northern prairie that finally end in the Rocky Mountain range. In these Canada has room for millions. Lastly comes our noble Pacific province of British Columbia, with its mountain ranges, harbours and forests. This vast expanse of country was for generations supposed to be so barren that it would not repay the trouble of settling it. Many Americans think so still; and in England, on the part of many persons otherwise able and well informed, there has long been a conviction that Canada is an inhospitable region, and that its inhabitants are backward and unenterprising as compared with their neighbours to the south. The members of the Imperial Federation League, certainly, do not share in these opinions. They are held, however, by an influential school of politicians and thinkers, of which the London *Times* may be taken as a leading exponent. One may gather the contempt with which that journal regards the idea of a separ-

* If England belonged to Canada, and France laid claim to Kent, the people of England would think it a very odd proceeding if Canada gave up that county to France without consulting them. Yet this is exactly what was done at the time of the Ashburton treaty.

ate destiny for Canada from the fact that it has never considered it worth while to have a correspondent of its own in this country. The *Times* is content to receive its information about us through the dubious channel of an American correspondent ; and that correspondent lives in a distant city that is a centre of neither politics nor commerce. We might as well get our own news about Great Britain from a correspondent in Lyons. I need not say that the greater part of the news sent to the *Times* about Canada from Philadelphia is inaccurate.

Though Canada is a part of the American continent, it is not, and never has been, a part of the United States. The deliberate choice of her people has been against it. For the last half century, at any rate, they have been free in making the choice ; and their choice has been, and is to day, to work out their destiny on this continent in their own way. We might have long ago joined the United States, if we would ; but we would not. It is interesting to trace the origin of this repugnance.

When the English colonies were once where the Eastern States are now, the regions now occupied by Canada from the Atlantic to the great lakes were wholly under the dominion of France. The fortunes of war made these territories British. But while Britain gained in the north she shortly afterwards lost her colonies in the south. Numbers, however, of her children preferred the old flag. They migrated northwards, and settled the forest-covered regions of Upper Canada, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and part of Lower Canada. So an entire reversal took place. What before was French became English, and what was English became American. It is noticeable that the French inhabitants of Lower Canada, though often approached, have never shown a desire to affiliate with the American Republic. Thus, then, the very foundation of Canada, the *raison d'être* of her continuance as a separate entity on this continent, has been the deliberate and continuous preference of her people for British institutions rather than for American. And this is true in spite of the rebellion of 1837 : for this rebellion was an outbreak against a mode of rule, which, though British in form, was anti-British in character. The rebellion, in fact, if we go to its foundation, was a struggle for British Parliamentary institutions. The struggle was successful. The British system of Parliamentary government by ministers responsible to the people, as distinguished from the congressional system of the States, has ever since been our prized

inheritance. A constantly increasing population has occupied these regions for four or five generations, and of their own free will they have always resolved to keep their country a separate entity on this continent. The multitudes of new comers to our shores have imbibed the same sentiment, or brought it with them. However dissatisfied they may have been with the Government at home, they have invariably on settling down in Canada become a part of a population who prefer union with Great Britain to union with the United States.

Why is all this? It has been a deep and long enduring sentiment. It has stood unshaken amidst numerous vicissitudes. There must be a strong and substantial reason for it. There undoubtedly is. I think the reason is a three-fold one. It has an element of patriotism in it, and an element of independence, both strongly rooted in our composite national character. There is besides, a strong conviction of the superiority of the influences that proceed from Britain to those which reach us from the States.

FIRST : *Patriotism.*

We love our land ; we are proud of it ; we take an honest and abiding interest in its welfare. We love it largely because we have *made* it what it is, and I think we love it the more because of the enormous difficulties we have overcome in taming its wildness, and making it subservient to our use. We have some reason to think that in the process of subduing the country (I do not mean subduing our fellows, but subduing the forest, the lake, the river, and the sea) we have developed the hardest, the healthiest, and the most intelligent of the peoples that occupy the Continent.

What was this portion of North America when we or our ancestors came to it. Let us try to picture it to an Englishman. If he can imagine England, as at one time it certainly was, wholly covered by forests and swamps, without a mile of road, without a field, farm, church or house, with not a single village, town or city through its length and breadth, without a bridge over its rivers, and without a harbour on its coasts, its sole inhabitants being wandering savages, its woods filled with wolves, bears and wild deer, he can picture what a large part of Canada was, within the memory of living men ; and what the whole of it was, not many generations ago. A vast expanse of varied territory covered by primeval forests, not a single mile of road being made through them, not a bridge, not a harbour, not a civilized house, not a civilized man. The task of

converting this region into the Canada of to-day is, I venture to say, utterly unthinkable to any ordinary Englishman, for it is unlike anything within the bounds of his experience. We in Canada have taken this savage wilderness and transformed it into a country filled with the conveniencies and luxuries of modern civilization. We have surveyed and mapped out regions which came into our possession, penetrating interminable forests for the purpose. We have divided the land into counties, ridings and townships. We have covered the whole area of it with roads, having constructed not less than 100,000 miles of them, nearly all through the forests in the first place. This is independent of great public works of the Government, such as canals, railways, harbours, light-houses, breakwaters, deepening river channels, &c, for which purposes mainly our national debt was contracted.

The labour of making roads has been a bagatelle compared with the labour of making farms. The words "making farms" will sound strange to English ears, for ninety-nine out of every hundred in England imagine that the farms of the motherland are natural features of the country. But a farm is a manufactured article, just as truly as a waggon or a threshing machine. It has to be made, just as truly as a house has to be built. The material is of the Great Creator—the handiwork is of man.

Now we have thus made about 30,000,000 acres of farms. The whole of this has been done by the process of cutting down the woods. It is a very low average which gives 20 trees to an acre of ground, for numbers of acres in the forest have five times as many. But on this moderate scale of computation we arrive at the conclusion that more than *six hundred millions* of forest trees have been cut down to make the farms of the present day. Our farmers may well be proud of their lands, when they have cost them so much labor. We have built some 100,000 or 150,000 farm houses. Those of the early days were simply wooden sheds. Thousands of the Canadian farm houses of the present day are substantial and handsome dwellings, with beautiful orchards and gardens surrounding them. And our country, now that we have made it, is one of the most fertile, productive, and beautiful on the face of the earth, with a bracing and sunny climate adapted in a high degree to the development of the race. *

* Scarcely any part of Canada is as far north as London, and by far the greater part of it is south of the latitude of Paris.

Thinly populated as Canada is compared with Great Britain, we still have hundreds of thriving villages with their shops, dwellings, and churches. We have scores of towns also with their gaslit streets, telegraphs, shops, villas, banks, and railway stations. We have not a few cities, with their numerous spires and towers, betokening the presence of the Cathedral, the University, the Municipal building, with miles of handsome streets, mansions, factories, warehouses, churches, clubs, opera houses, and every convenience and luxury that European cities can boast. We have in this city of Montreal alone, besides street railway cars, and omnibuses, some 800 cabs. Some 70 railway trains come and go from our stations every day. We have ten daily newspapers. I hardly know a more striking way to put advanced civilization than this.

The last and crowning work in the way of material progress has been the construction of railways. We do not take all the credit of this. Our earlier railways were designed, engineered, and constructed by Englishmen. But in time we learned the art of building railways for ourselves, and we improved even upon our Mother Country. Canada has the unique triumph of having conceived, engineered, and built the greatest railway on the face of the globe. The Canadian Pacific Railway is wholly our own work.

But other things have been done in Canada demanding a far higher order of ability. We have established a complete system of municipal and parliamentary government.

This is our own work. Generations of Canadian statesmen, guided, indeed, now and then by able administrators from England, have accomplished this. The crowning work of Canadian Statesmen in rearing up our political fabric was the welding together of our separate provinces into one confederation; a work demanding the highest qualities of statemanship. Following both American and British models, we have improved upon them. Canada is a perfect Federation already, and in this respect has far outstripped in her political development any other colony of Great Britain. We have well established ecclesiastical systems. Our jurisprudence and laws command universal respect and obedience. We have a system of education, beginning at the very foundation in the common country school, and reaching up to universities whose culture is of the same standard as that of the old universities of the Mother Country and United States.

Our shipping interests are very large, both inland and of the ocean. Our friends in England will probably be surprised to learn that they are enormously greater in proportion to our population than those of the United States. Seven lines of ocean steamships come to the port of Montreal, most of them either originated, owned, or controlled in Canada. It may surprise them, too, to be told that our trade and commerce are much greater in proportion to population than those of the United States. We have a thoroughly established Banking system almost wholly our own creation. Our manufactures and mines are rapidly developing. * Art, Literature, Science, all have their place in our midst. Our social life and habits are fashioned after the best European models, both English and French, and the country is a great and glorious one, with noble inland seas, picturesque chains of mountains, beautiful coasts and harbours ; a splendid system of rivers, and, what has come to us almost as a new revelation, a vast and fertile prairie region with room enough in it for millions more of inhabitants.

(2.) Such is the Canada of to-day ; and it is our own country. There is not only patriotism, but Independence in our love of it. Our fathers and we have toiled to produce it. We have an abiding faith in great possibilities for the future, and we mean, under Providence, to keep these possibilities under our own control in close unity with the Mother Country. Our neighbours to the South have more than once attempted to take the land for their own, and have been repulsed. They have made diplomatic approaches ; but we have not responded. They have tried a system of gentle pressure ; but this has only aroused a sterner spirit of self-reliance. Great Britain has always aided us by her forces ; and our own people have been proud to rally around them as a nucleus, in defence of their homes and their country.

The toils of the early pioneers, their sacrifices, hardships, and endurance, both of men and women, are almost inconceivable to us of these later times, and they have been, and are now, entirely inconceivable to our brethren in England. Some of them in their ignorance, notably those of the John Bright school, have cast jibes and reproaches at us at the very time, when, by heroic sacrifices and wrestling with

* Our protective policy may be criticized, with reason or unreason. Our own people are by no means united on that subject. It is not a question of trade merely. But there can be no diversity of opinion as to the goodness of our wares ; that is well established.

the fierce forces of nature in lonely forest regions, the pioneers of early days were preparing the times of comfort and prosperity under which we now live, and under which Canadians have become larger consumers of British goods than any other inhabitants of this continent.*

(3.) With regard to the superiority of the influences that flow from Great Britain, a whole essay would be required to do justice to the subject. They are social, literary, and political, multifarious in number, and constant in duration.

As between Great Britain and the United States, the opinion of Canadians may be expressed in a Scriptural quotation. "No man when he hath tasted old wine straightway desireth new : for he saith THE OLD IS BETTER."

PESSIMISM.

But, say a few, even among ourselves, the Canada of to-day is a bundle of disjointed provinces, and cannot long subsist together as a Confederation. In support of this they point to the rivalries and jealousies that crop out at times between the different provinces. They point, too, to the alleged exodus of our people to the United States. They allege also that there is no natural affinity or commercial bond between the Provinces.

As to the first, these rivalries are no stronger than those which have constantly subsisted between different sections and States of the neighboring Union, and between different interests and districts of Great Britain itself. The rivalries of the provinces of Canada are, indeed, but trifling affairs compared with the deadly feuds that have raged between north and south and east and west in the union. But as a matter of fact, our rivalries are forgotten in a moment when some question of common interest stirs us all. In the Riel Rebellion, spite of pessimist opinion to the contrary, all the provinces responded at once to the call to defend our country.

As to the exodus of population, it is well known to have been grossly exaggerated. If statistics are correct, many of us have migrated to the States a dozen times at least. Not the slightest reliance can be placed upon figures which are got up for political purposes. They can be promptly repudiated by their very authors if party exigencies call

*The British Board of Trade returns do us injustice. The great bulk of our imports and exports in winter are entered as if they belonged to the United States, because at that season they pass through American ports. But they are Canadian for all that.

for it. Travel and intercourse between Canada and the States are just as free, and as constant as between Scotland and England, or England and the Continent. Young men from our agricultural districts migrate to the manufacturing districts of New England, just as they do from the agricultural to the manufacturing counties in Old England. But numbers of Americans have crossed the northern boundary and settled in Canada. They are constantly doing so. Many of the most intelligent and wealthy of our population are American in origin, but they become thoroughly Canadian in feeling whenever they have lived long enough in the country to acquire an interest in it. As to the want of affinity of interest and of commercial connection between the provinces of Canada, no one will allege this who has competent knowledge of the subject. But some conductors of the press have not competent knowledge of it. That "superficial omniscience" which is said to be the curse of modern journalism, leads to constant misconception and misstatements in our journals. It is, however, a large subject, and we may all make the common mistake of speaking of the whole when we know but a part. I think, however, the following will be near the truth:—

1. When the people of old Canada and the Maritime Provinces met to discuss Confederation, some twenty years ago, they found almost instantly, that they were not strangers and foreigners, but one people. Their sentiments, antecedents, ideas, and aspirations, were fundamentally the same.

2. The trade between the different Provinces is not published in any Custom House returns. It is supposed, therefore, by some, who have no other means of knowing, to be non-existent. But bankers *have* other means of knowing. Speaking as a banker, and of what I know as such, I assert that the trade between Ontario, Quebec, and the Maritime Provinces is large, constant, and natural. The Maritime Provinces are buying their provisions and breadstuffs in the best markets when they buy them in Ontario and Quebec. The grain and flour of Manitoba enter also into the supply, and will probably do so increasingly. As to exports, no doubt the United States and Great Britain are the best customers of the Maritime Provinces, and so they are of all the Provinces. But who ever heard that it is necessary to the unity of a country that its whole trade should be within itself, and that it should have no intercourse with foreign nations? This is certainly an odd idea to be propounded by people speaking the English

tongue. In fact, the same reasons which would show that Canada is a bundle of disconnected provinces, would prove Great Britain to be a bundle of disconnected counties, and the adjoining Republic a mere jumble of warring States. The logic of facts is against all this. If Ontario and Nova Scotia have no natural connection, what natural connection is there between Minnesota and Georgia? Or between Ohio and South Carolina? Or Montana and Kentucky? Looking at Great Britain, what natural connection is there between Norfolk and Cornwall, or between Northumberland and Kent, or Lanark and Glamorgan? It is not long since that the people of Cornwall used to talk of people in the Midland counties as living in foreign parts. That is a fact well known to residents.

But England is not going back to the Heptarchy. And the United States endured the horrors of a terrible war to keep her separate parts unbroken.

Let Canadians not be misled by pessimists from among themselves. They should know by this time that such pessimism is generally the pessimism of opposition to the Government, or the pessimism of natural restlessness, or the pessimism that always looks to the distant and unattainable, as a haven of contentment and delight. There is also an interested pessimism in the minds of a few persons, some of whom are Americans connected with our press, who constantly show their ignorance of Canada, though writing in its newspapers. Such as these desire to foment discontent on this side of the line, in order to bring about a desire for annexation.

Mr. Goldwin Smith's pessimistic views are well known. He is a man whom it is becoming to speak of in terms of high respect. In theory he depreciates Canada as a Dominion, and would have us cast in our lot with the United States. But the logic of facts cannot but have weight. It is hardly intruding on the concerns of private life to say that though Mr. Smith left England to settle in the United States, he left that country long ago to take up his residence in Canada. And he lives here still. Many of us think that, if Canada became a part of the States, nearly everything which attracts him to Canada would disappear.

Canada, then, is not a disjointed bundle of provinces. We have largely a common history and traditions. We have a common flag and country. We have common laws, feelings, and aspirations. We are most closely united by commercial ties, and even the difference of language, race, and local laws in one of the provinces does not prevent

us being one people as Canadians. To many thoughtful persons of English blood, the French element, with its romantic traditions, its fine literary culture, its charm of social life, its grace, elegance, and refinement, is not the least attractive of the varied features that go to make Canada a country to be loved with a strong and abiding attachment.

We have great aspirations, and a great ambition—namely, to be and to do in future what will be worthy of our past, and worthy of the Empire of which we form a part.

The early French explorers, such as Champlain and LaSalle, were men of whom any nation in the world might be proud. The men that have made modern Canada what it is, from the toiling settler in forest solitudes, to the statesmen forming plans of government for half a continent, will be appreciated at their worth as time reduces all things to their true proportions.

Our material future is assured. Nothing can prevent our growing wealthy and prosperous. But it is well for us occasionally to consider in what mould our political future will be cast. That is a matter on which opinions differ. Shall we remain as we are? Shall we seek annexation to the States? Shall we seek by secession to become an isolated nation? Shall we seek, while retaining a virtual independence, to become one of a confederation of States of which our Mother Country is the centre? These are great questions. Their discussion will bring about a clashing and conflict of opinions. But out of this clashing and conflict there will finally emerge a settled conviction which will shape our political destiny.

Let us look at each of these calmly, and in the light of knowledge and reason.

ANNEXATION.

Putting aside our continuance as at present, which is scarcely a matter for discussion, let the consideration of Annexation first come before us.

It is a fixed conviction with numbers of Englishmen that annexation to the United States must ultimately ensue. In the United States themselves the sentiment was once universal. The words "manifest destiny" used in this connection had become part of their common speech. Of late years this opinion has been modified. Those who have a more perfect knowledge of Canada seldom express it. Both Englishmen and Americans have been misled by maps and geographical considerations. But geography and maps have been the

source of many illusions. They deceived many during the war between the North and South. Numbers of Englishmen imagined, from studying maps and geography, that the South was by far the greater power of the two. Events undeceived them. If we, on this side of the Atlantic, judged the divisions of Europe simply by maps and geography we should be similarly deceived. We should certainly think Spain and Portugal to be one country. We should find no place for Belgium or Holland ; still less for Switzerland ; Germany and Austria ought to be one state ; and why should Russia be bounded as it is ?

In looking at the boundaries and future of nations, tradition, sentiment, laws, and above all, FLAG, are the vital forces that determine them.

I do not wish to become responsible for statements as to what the people of Canada may think, or what the people of Canada may determine to do at some future time. Assertions as to what millions or tens of millions of people may do, belong rather to the irresponsible newspaper reporter whose follies amuse us at our breakfast table. As to the future we can only draw inferences. About the past and the present, we have accurate knowledge. The following facts are, I submit, unquestionable as bearing on annexation.

We have had Legislatures of our own in all the Provinces, meeting every year for more than two generations back. Every possible variety of subject affecting the interests of Canada has been discussed in these Legislatures ; but in no one of them, at any time, under any conjunction of circumstances, no matter what political party he belonged to, has any member of Parliament ever brought forward a resolution looking to annexation.

Further :—Numbers of elections have been held during the last fifty years amongst us, and thousands of political speeches have been made. I venture to say that politicians here are as keenly observant of the drift of public opinion as they are anywhere in the world. No man in any election speech, at any time, in any part of the country, has ever spoken of annexation as a remedy for the political evils and wrongs, which those in opposition invariably descant upon.

Some years ago, a member of the Dominion Parliament, in the heat of debate, stated that unless certain grievances of the people of Canada were redressed, they might look to Washington for a remedy. This declaration caused great excitement in the House. It was indignantly commented upon by the press at the time, and for years was used, justly or unjustly, to bring reproach upon the political character of the person who uttered it.

These are facts, that no one acquainted with Canada for the last thirty or forty years will dispute, and they are pregnant with meaning when we consider how free our institutions are, with what freedom we discuss the measures of our ministers, the conduct of our Governors, the proceedings of the English Parliament, and of the Legislatures of the United States. They point clearly to this, that the steady and persistent flow of public opinion is in another direction than annexation.

This is the more remarkable, considering the close ties that bind us to the people of the United States in other respects. In spite of tariffs, there is a heavy volume of trade between us, to our mutual advantage. Ecclesiastically, we are almost one people. Ministers and dignitaries of the various Churches often interchange positions on both sides. In various forms of Christian activity and philanthropic work there is no dividing line between us. Our intercourse with the United States in literature, art, and in some strata of social life, is close and constant. Streams of American tourists regularly visit Canada for recreation. Canadians just as constantly visit the picturesque regions of the United States. We thoroughly appreciate (and we know them more accurately than our English friends) the good qualities of the people of the United States in many relations of life. But with their political system Canadians have no sympathy. Many of the most intelligent among us are persuaded that the American people are as great as they are in spite of that system, and not in consequence of it; in fact, that they owe their greatness to their race, their traditions, antecedents, religion, and inherited habits, rather than to a paper Constitution, which would have been shattered to pieces again and again, but for the qualities they inherit from their English ancestors. We, in Canada, have had the advantage of one hundred years of experience. We have formed our Constitution on better models, and I imagine the ideas of the more thoughtful and experienced amongst us would be something like these :—

That annexation to the United States would be a distinct step backward in our political life; that we have a more perfectly developed liberty in a Parliamentary system by which Ministers are directly responsible to the people; that we have a better judicial system, a better administration of the law, a more ready redress of grievances, a sounder and more practically developed system of public education. Our impression is that the United States are fast becoming already an

unwieldy aggregation of communities; that public opinion scarcely makes itself felt in its system of government; that the daily press (except the financial journals), has lost all its political, and most of its intellectual power, having become largely a mere channel for the retailing of the silliest of twaddle and the falsest of reports; that while private enterprises of every kind in the States are conducted with the highest ability and enterprise, politics, either State or Federal, are becoming more and more corrupt. We, in Canada, know how far from perfect our own Government, or system of government, is. It would be absurd, indeed, to claim perfection, either absolute or approximate, for any system of government on earth. But we are persuaded that to join the United States would not be a change for the better but for the worse. If the United States would adopt our system of government, it would undoubtedly be a change for the better for them, but as they are too large already, it would indeed be an absurdity to add to their cares the government of another half of this continent.

With regard to trade, Canada would lose as much as she would gain by a change in this direction.

SECESSION OR INDEPENDENCE.

Another idea, however, and one growing in favour amongst the young men of Canada, is that of Independence. Not that it is an immediate practical question, for it is not. Men who look forward to shaping the destiny of Canada in this direction, so far as can be judged, are willing to bide their time, being convinced that events will determine the destiny of Canada as they wish. This idea falls in with the spirit which has already had to do with determining our position. We inherited it from our ancestors, and it is not likely to become weaker but stronger. We have a large share of independence already. Those who desire a complete and absolute independence, in other words Secession, may well be reminded of the following considerations:—

A State that declares itself independent must be prepared to maintain its independence by force against all comers. If it is not strong enough to do that, it is not truly and properly independent. Our position in that respect is not like that of the smaller nations of Europe, whose strength consists in the jealousy of neighbouring powers, Switzerland could not hold its position for a month if attacked by France; but Germany and Italy would defend it. If attacked by Germany, France and Italy would combine to defend it. France could overrun Belgium and take it without the slightest difficulty, but

England and Germany would instantly interfere. What then is our position in Canada? We have one of the strongest nations in the world for a neighbour. We have no other neighbour within a seven days journey across the sea. If we were an independent State, and a cause of quarrel arose with the United States, it is improbable in the highest degree that any European State would interfere. What possible interest would either England or France have in any quarrel between us and our neighbours? Now, in such a quarrel, does any sane man suppose that Canada could hold her own, and keep such an enormous territory as we have? It could be broken in half a dozen places within a month. But, reply some, "Why anticipate a quarrel? Our neighbors are friendly." He must be an extreme optimist who does not see that causes of quarrel do sometimes loom up, and are brewing even now in the question of our Fisheries. But we have held our own before when assailed, why not again? Certainly we have held it when the power of Great Britain was joined with our own, and when the whole force of the Empire, to use Mr. Gladstone's words on a memorable occasion, was at our back. Under such circumstances we could doubtless hold it again, but not otherwise. Some persons imagine it would be a great advantage to make our own treaties. It would, beyond doubt. But treaties without force behind them would prove pieces of waste paper. So far as treaties are concerned we may depend upon it that in any which affect Canadian interests, Canadians in future will be called on to take a part. That they have been ignored with persistent blindness on former occasions is the reason why large tracts of territory that naturally belong to us have become the property of our southern neighbors. American diplomatists have always had the advantage of a perfect knowledge of the country they were striving to obtain. English diplomatists, on the other hand, were absolutely ignorant, and, singular to say, they never thought of asking advice from the people whose interests were directly affected. If Canadians had negotiated the Ashburton Treaty, we should have had very different results from those which were obtained. If Canadians had had a voice in fixing the boundary of our North-West, it would have contained millions of acres more than it does. Canadians never would have allowed a foreign power to dominate the approaches and command the harbors of British Columbia. We may some day have reason bitterly to regret our supineness in this matter. Such things,

however, belong to the past. We have had a hand in making one treaty, and proved that we were perfectly capable of taking care of our own interests. Some persons imagine that Canadians would be of greater consequence in Europe if we were an independent country. We have often been irritated to find what greater consideration is given to United States people than to Canadians. But it is, after all, solely because the United States have become a great and powerful people. It used not to be so. Americans, in the lifetime of many of us, were looked upon in Europe as only half civilized, and treated quite as contemptuously as Canadians have been till recently. If Canada were an independent State, what sort of a position should we have amongst the representatives and ambassadors of the nations of the world? A tenth rate position at present; that is certain. It is altogether a dream that we should be respected simply because we are independent. We may depend upon it that any self assertion of such a little state as we would be, would be severely snubbed. When Canada does something great in the eyes of the world she will be respected. We have made a wilderness capable of supporting 5,000,000 of people. That is something to begin with. We put down the Riel rebellion with our own forces. That was something. The marches, fatigues and privations of our volunteer troops proved them to be the equals of any in the world. That was something. We have made the Pacific Railway. That is something, and a very great something. The British Association has been here, and met its peers. That is something. The sneers of the *London Times* with regard to the development of science in Canada have recoiled upon its own head, showing that the ignorance was not in Canada but in Printing House Square.

I need scarcely say that such a change as secession would involve very grave financial considerations. It is not possible, however, to discuss these.

It is by deeds that Canada must make herself respected in the community of nations, and she is rapidly doing it. Let us go on as we are, and we shall find that Canada is no longer considered as a part of the United States, and that to be a Canadian entitles a man to hold up his head in any community in the world.

FEDERATION.

My object in this paper has rather been to present concisely our own position for the information of those who may not understand it, than to discuss at length the great questions that are connected with Federation. This paper, however, would not be complete unless something, however little, was said in regard to this.

To begin with, there are obviously various forms, more or less complete and practicable, of such a Federation as is proposed.

(1.) A perfect and complete Federation of the whole Empire would take somewhat of the following form :—It would be such a union as is found in Canada between its several Provinces, or in the neighboring Republic between the several States. In these Federations there is perfect free trade between all the Provinces or States, one set of customs duties is levied in all its parts, common interests, such as Post Office, finance, banking, commerce, tariff, excise, being controlled by a central Parliament, consisting of two branches of the legislature. A Governor, or President, is over all, and each component part has its own legislature, governor, judiciary, taxing power to a certain extent, and jurisdiction over certain specified concerns. If this system were applied to the whole British Empire, there would be perfect free trade and an entire abolition of all customs, between the various countries and territories composing it. There would be a common debt, common taxation, common tariff, and common banking, commercial, and bankruptcy laws. With regard to the machinery for carrying on this federated government, there would need to be considerable changes in Great Britain. England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales would all probably require separate local governments, legislative and executive, and separate systems of local jurisprudence and taxation. The present House of Commons and House of Lords in a modified form might constitute the nucleus of these Local Legislatures. A Lieut.-Governor would require to be appointed for England, and others for Scotland, Ireland and Wales. The Colonies are already organized on this system. Then, when all the component parts of the Empire had their separate executive and legislative systems provided for, a higher executive and legislative machinery would require to be constituted to deal with the affairs of the Federated Empire. This higher machinery would correspond with the two houses of Legislature in the United States, the Presi-

dent and Cabinet being above all, or with our own Dominion Parliament, with the Governor-General and Ministry above all. The head of the Imperial machinery would, of course, be the Queen.

But an altogether new Parliament would require to be elected, of course consisting of two branches of the Legislature—a House of Commons, and a Senate or House of Lords. All parts of the Empire would require to be represented on an equal footing, in numbers proportioned to their population, or whatever else might be agreed on. This body would deal with such great matters as the commerce, tariff, finance, taxation, and debt of the whole Empire. The post office, the army, the navy, and the diplomatic service would be under its control. The place in which such a Parliament would meet would, of course, be London. This would be Federation pure and simple, ample and complete, with all its powers, functions, and obligations thoroughly defined. It would need, however, to be created by a written constitution.

Is such a scheme of government as this within the bounds of practical realization? And could it be carried out if set on foot? Let us consider what would require to be done.

A world-wide Convention would require to be held in order to draw up a new constitution for the British Empire. Is this practicable? If such a constitution were drawn up, would the people of the British Islands accept such an extraordinary increase of governmental machinery as it would involve? Would it be possible to prevail on the present House of Commons to pass such a series of self-denying ordinances as would be necessary? Would it be possible within any measurable space of time to settle the knotty questions of the division of legislative functions and powers between what is local for Great Britain and what is Imperial for all the world? I merely throw out these suggestions and leave others in Great Britain to answer them.

But what the bearing of such a complete federation would be on Canada is a question which I will attempt to answer. Under such a system we might undoubtedly elect our own Governor, if we wished, whatever advantage there might be in that. I believe there would be none. All the manufactures of Great Britain would enter the country free of duty. This would infallibly destroy our rising industries in cottons, woollens, iron, etc., render valueless numbers of factories and mills, and destroy the property of thousands of our

citizens to the amount of many millions. It would destroy nearly the whole of our revenue from Customs duties, and render it necessary that the debt of the Dominion of Canada should be assumed by the Federation. It would undoubtedly lead to an immense diminution of our trade with the United States. It would lead to a transfer of control of our most important interests to a Legislature 3,000 miles away, in which we would have but a mere fraction of influence. On these grounds, and others not mentioned, I have no hesitation in saying that such a system of Imperial Federation as this would never be consented to by the people of Canada. It would prove utterly unworkable if attempted. It would create a thousand complications, disputes, questions, and strifes. For Canada it would be nothing short of a revolution. It does not seem that any revolutionary change is called for by any exigencies that exist at present.

A MORE EXCELLENT WAY.

But then can nothing be done? I do not see that we are shut up to this conclusion. There is a more excellent way. But in such matters, *Festina Lente* is a good rule. Let us hasten slowly. In my judgment, the utmost that can be done at present in the way of Federation is to have Great Britain and her Colonies closely bound in a defensive alliance against any Power or State that may attempt aggression upon any of them. Alliances of this sort are generally offensive as well as defensive. But it is doubtful if an alliance that would bind the Colonies to furnish men, material, and money for an aggressive war could be carried out. For the defence of the Empire, however, all parts of the Empire might fairly be called on to contribute. But the adjustment of the proportion of each would be a matter calling for large information, much judgment, and a sound, impartial estimate of the position of each part in relation to the whole. We have long ceased to cost Great Britain anything for military defence; and the only harbor in which British ships of war are now stationed is Halifax, on the Atlantic.

As a mode of expressing and giving effect to this defensive alliance an Imperial Council of some kind would be necessary. How constituted, with what powers, (what taxing powers or otherwise,) how often and where to meet,—these are all questions which would require careful consideration and adjustment. The nucleus of such a council exists already in the Commissioners and Agents-General of the various

Colonies permanently resident in London. To these might be added a certain number of English statesmen to constitute the voice of Great Britain in the Council. How to select them would be a matter for consideration. Probably the appointment of certain members of the Cabinet or Privy Council (*ex-officio*) would be best. A council consisting of representative men numbering thirty to forty persons would be a body whose conclusions would carry weight with any Ministry, whether in Great Britain or in any Colony. Its recommendations would doubtless be carried into effect. Could there be greater power entrusted to it than advisory? I doubt it. To the consideration of such a council might be referred all questions affecting the relations between the Colonies and Great Britain, and between the Colonies and other countries (tariffs always excepted, for no Colonial Parliament would surrender its power in this respect). Our fisheries question is a case in point. Another is the occupation of the islands adjacent to Australia by foreign powers; another still, the boundary and race question in South Africa. Another and more practical one for Canada is the claim of France to certain rights on the coast of Newfoundland. The transcendently important questions that are involved in the Government of our Indian Empire, I am afraid would be beyond the consideration of a Council such as this. The positions of India, and of countries like Australia and Canada are radically different.

The idea of the Colonies being represented in the House of Commons, and having votes only on colonial questions, is one which would be found very difficult in practice. It would certainly not be liked by the House of Commons itself. The members from the Colonies, too, would always feel themselves in an invidious position. It would intensify the idea of inferiority, against which we have so often protested. This being the case, our best men would not be likely to accept it, and inferior men would be entirely out of place there.

With regard to differential duties for the purpose of a Defence Fund, specially or for general purposes, some grave difficulties present themselves. I do not say that they are insuperable, and it is well to consider the suggestion fairly. Great Britain, in that case, would be required to tax the food products of the United States and Russia. This might be a very distasteful proceeding to the now dominant English democracy. Differential duties against the products of the

adjoining Republic going into England or coming into Canada would certainly not be liked by the Americans, but as a keenly practical people they would recognize the fairness of these being imposed and maintained, so long as they persist in almost prohibitive duties against our Empire. Greater difficulties than all these, however, have been solved before, and will be solved again.

To sum up in a few words :

Canada stands firmly on the northern portion of the American Continent. She is thoroughly satisfied with her territory so far as it goes, though she ought to have had much more. She appreciates the ties that bind her to Great Britain. An immense majority of her people would strengthen them by every possible means. Canadians have a warm admiration for the great qualities of the American people, and desire to live on terms of friendly intercourse with them. But political union they conceive would be political death.

Complete independence is not practicable. It would be dangerous to try the experiment.

A complete Federation of the Empire, in the sense of having common customs duties, tariff, debt, revenue, and finance would also be impracticable. But a machinery may be devised by which the Colonies and the British Islands can be united for common defence, so that the strength of the whole may be rallied round any portion attacked ; all to contribute, rateably, to the expense, and a council for the discussion of Imperial questions to be formed, to which all matters relating to the rights or interests of any of the Colonies or of the Mother Country in her relation to them, may be referred.

In the discussion of these matters the inhabitants of the Colonies will require to be treated as citizens of the great British Empire, having an equal standing with citizens inhabiting any other part of it. If there is to be a common understanding amongst us, there must be no talk of putting pressure upon any of the Colonies with regard to tariffs or any other matter. One article contributed to the first number of the magazine devoted to Imperial Federation contains some hints of this kind. But such an idea will have to be abandoned. I know little of other colonies, but my impression is that they would not bear it. I am very sure, at any rate, that Canada would not.